

# WEEK OF ACTION PLATFORM

## **WE KNOW THAT THE “DROP-OUT” CRISIS IS ACTUALLY THE “PUSH-OUT” CRISIS.**

- Youth are being pushed out of school by zero-tolerance policies\*, unwelcoming school environments, inadequate curricula and other harmful school policies and practices.

- Schools push out students of color, LGBT students, students with disabilities, and students from low-income communities at higher rates.

## **WE DEMAND SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL POLICIES THAT PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF STUDENTS.**

- End zero-tolerance\* and the criminalization of youth.\*\*

- Create positive school environments based on dignity and respect.

- Adopt positive approaches to discipline like restorative practices and positive behavior supports.

- Rely on community outreach workers and counselors to support our young people in school rather than police to patrol.

- Push for passage of federal legislation that promotes positive school climates, like the Successful, Safe, and Healthy Students Act (S. 919), Positive Behavior for Safe and Effective Schools Act and the Restorative Justice in Schools Act (H.R. 415).

\*A zero tolerance discipline policy is a school discipline policy or practice that results in an automatic disciplinary consequence such as in-school or out-of-school suspension, expulsion, or involuntary school transfer for any student who commits one or more listed offenses. A school discipline policy may be a zero tolerance policy even if administrators have some discretion to modify the consequence on a case-by-case basis.

\*\* Criminalization is the labeling of an individual or group, his or her activities, culture and/or identity as deviant, dangerous and undesirable and the corresponding suppression of that individual or group by authorities. Criminalized people and populations do not need to engage in illegal or harmful behavior to be treated as criminals but are regularly targeted for surveillance, police stops, frisks and questioning, and school suspension and expulsion. Criminalization often extends beyond police and court systems to impact the larger society's perception and treatment of the individual or group. (Adapted from Youth Justice Coalition definition).

The Dignity in Schools Campaign (DSC) challenges the systemic problem of pushout in our nation's schools and advocates for the human right of every child to a quality education and to be treated with dignity. DSC unites parents, youth, educators and advocates in a campaign to promote local and national alternatives to a culture of zero-tolerance, punishment and removal.

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